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Written statement* submitted by the World Peace Council, a non-governmental organization on the roster

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Universal Periodical Review of Human Rights in the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

The World Peace Council (WPC) supports the just causes of the peoples and their right to define and determine their fortunes since its foundation in 1949. Throughout the history of the Vietnamese people in the 20th century, we have witnessed the consecutive colonial and aggresive invasion and occupation of Viet Nam by foreign imperialist forces and the struggle of the people of Viet Nam for its liberation and national sovereignty, based on the democratic wishes of its people and reflected in the constitutions of the SR Viet Nam.

The defense of the Human Rights is a basic principle of the WPC, part of its character and constitution. As an International Non-governmental Organisation with Consultative status at the UN, accredited to the Human Rights Council in Geneva we want to stress on the following facts and aspects:

The 1992 Constitution (amended in 2001) ensures people's equal rights in all political, economic, social areas as well as before the law; the right to freedom of religion and belief; the right to freedom of movement and residence within Viet Nam; the right to complain and denounce; right to work, study and enjoy health care… regardless of their sex, social status, belief, religion. The improvement of the legal system on human rights, civil rights was harmoniously and implemented through programs on the establishment of laws and ordinances as well as policies toward the implementation of these legal documents.

We explicitly want to mention in this context the Amended Labour Code (2012), Amended and supplemented Law on Lawyers (2012), Amended Law on Publication (2012). In 2013, the National Assembly held the first-ever confidence vote on the performance of top leaders of the State and Government, showing the decisive voice of the National Assembly in State management.

The State of Viet Nam attaches importance to the guarantee of the right to State and society management directly and indirectly through the selection of their representatives. Viet Nam's very high election turn out at the elections for the XIII National Assembly in May 2011 shows that the people are very well aware of their right and the role of the National Assembly in exercising the right to state and society management of the people.

The right to petition and complain of the people is respected and protected. The handling of people's petitions and complaints has improved a great deal. The law also provides for the compensation of material and mental losses of petitioners.

Viet Nam has improved and broadened educational and training programs in human rights for employees working at government agencies. Many seminars and workshops have been organized with the participation of representatives from a wide range of ministries, research and training centres, such as Human rights research institute (at the Ho Chi Minh academy for politics and public administration), Legal Department of the Hanoi National University, etc. Classes on human rights issues are also conducted on a frequent basis. These efforts have provided the employees working at government agencies with basic knowledge on human rights. Viet Nam has also enhanced education on human rights for local officials to improve awareness, capability and efficiency in handling human rights issues at local level.

Viet Nam is a multi-religion country with all the major religions in the world (Buddhism, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim…); The consistent policy of Viet Nam is to respect and facilitate the exercise of the right to freedom of religion and belief by all the people, uphold the solidarity and harmony among religions, guarantee the equality and non-discrimination as well as protect activities of religious groups by law. The country has the second biggest Catholic community in Southeast-Asia. 95% of all the people have belief (including 22.3 million being followers of religions, accounting for 1/5 of the population); there are 25 thousand of worshipping places.

The right to freedom of press and information of the Vietnamese people has been reflected through the fast and diverse development of the mass media. By March 2013, there are 812 print newspapers and 1,084 publications (compared to 676 and 700 respectively in 2009); nearly 17,000 registered journalists; 01 national news agency, 67 radio and television stations; 101 TV channels and 78 broadcasting channels, 74 electronic newspapers and magazines; 336

social networks and 1,174 registered e-portals (compared to 46 e-newspapers and 287 e-portals in 2011). The Voice of Viet Nam (VOV) Radio Station broadcasts throughout 99.5% of Viet Nam's territory and many other countries via satellite. Today, the VOV reaches more than 90% of all households in Viet Nam in comparison with 85% in 2008.

The democratic nature and transparency of the State is strengthened through the critiques from the press, media and feedbacks of all the people. Viet Nam's press and media have become a forum for exchanges regarding the supervision of the State's activities, thus contributing greatly to the fight against corruption and wrongdoings in Viet Nam.

Viet Nam ratified the ILO Convention 186 on Maritime Employment on the 8th of May 2013 and this Convention will come into effect for Viet Nam on the 8th of May 2014. Viet Nam is taking the final legal steps to sign and ratify the Convention Against Torture (CAT).

Viet Nam is party of almost all core international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR); International Convention on the Elimination of Radical Discrimination (CERD); Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Viet Nam is the second country in the world and the first in Asia to sign the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The country has also ratified 17 conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO), including those related to gender equality, rights of the child... Viet Nam signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) on 2008. In the process of ratification of the CRPD, Viet Nam has promulgated the Law on Persons with Disabilities on 2010. In 2012, Viet Nam has acceded to the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, the Convention No.122 on Employment Policy of the ILO.

Last but not least we want to emphasize on the huge efforts Viet Nam is doing for the victims of the toxic "Agent Orange" which was used by the USA against the Vietnamese people during the war and which is resulting till today in health consequences for the new generations of newborns and children. The state of Viet Nam is dealing with the consequences of crimes against its people, by taking care of the human and social rights of the victims and their families, without giving up the legal struggle for compensation of the victims at US courts.

In conclusion the WPC strongly recommends the positive approval of the achievements and records of Viet Nam in the field of Human Rights at the UPR in Geneva. Viet Nam is fulfilling the international standards at highest rank.

On behalf of the Secretariat of WPC,

Socorro Gomes, President

Thanassis Pafilis, General Secretary